IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1.   (Currently Amended) A computer implemented method of preventing execution of unnecessary joins between tables in a database, the method comprising the steps of:

      a.   presenting a Structured Query Language (SQL) statement to the database, the SQL statement having a scope that extends to a set of tables in the database and returning a set of results from the database;

      b.   preparing a list of tables that are related to returning the set of results but that are not directly referred to by the SQL statement, wherein the list of tables is the only list prepared;

      c.   removing tables that must be accessed in order to return the set of results from the list in accordance with a predetermined set of rules; and,

      d.   preventing execution of joins involving any of the tables remaining in the list, wherein there is at least one table remaining in the list.

2.   (Previously Presented) A computer implemented method according to claim 1, wherein the predetermined set of rules includes allowing removal of a table from the list if this table is part of a join chain.

3.   (Previously Presented) A computer implemented method according to claim 1, wherein the predetermined set of rules includes a rule allowing removal of a table from the list if this table forms the detail table in a join between a master table and a detail table.

4.   (Previously Presented) A computer implemented method according to claim 1, wherein the predetermined set of rules includes a rule allowing removal of a table from the list if detail item values might not exist in a master table joined to a detail table.

5.   (Previously Presented) A computer implemented method according to claim 1, wherein

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the predetermined set of rules includes a rule allowing removal of a table from the list if that table has a mandatory filter.

6. (Previously Presented) A computer implemented method according to claim 4, wherein the predetermined set of rules further includes a rule preventing removal of a table from the list that would otherwise be allowed, if the join is an outer join on a master table.

7. (Previously Presented) A computer implemented method according to claim 5, wherein the predetermined set of rules further includes a rule preventing removal of a table from the list that would otherwise be allowed, if the join is an outer join on a master table.

8. (Original) A computer program comprising computer program code means adapted to perform the steps of claim 1 when said program is run on a computer.

9. (Original) A computer program product comprising program code means stored on a computer readable medium for performing the method of claim 1 when said program product is run on a computer.